

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT ON BILL NO. **S. 39**

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TO:	The Honorable Glenn McConnell, Chairman, Senate Judiciary Committee		
FROM:	Office of State Budget, Budget and Control Board		
ANALYSTS:	Rodney Grizzle, Allan Kincaid and Harry Bell		
DATE:	January 31, 2007	SBD:	2007038

AUTHOR:	Senator Ford	PRIMARY CODE CITE:	20-7-1370
SUBJECT:	Family Court Judges - Election		

ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT ON GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES:
A Savings to the General Fund

ESTIMATED FISCAL IMPACT ON FEDERAL & OTHER FUND EXPENDITURES:
\$0 (No additional expenditures or savings are expected)

BILL SUMMARY:

Senate Bill 279 amends Section 20-7-1370 of the Code of Laws of South Carolina, 1976, by allowing family court judges to be popularly elected from the state senatorial districts by the qualified voters of such districts. The Bill also repeals Section 20-7-1410 which establishes the number of family court judges assigned to each judicial district.

EXPLANATION OF IMPACT:

Judicial Department

The Department indicates there will be a savings to the General Fund of the State due to the reduction in the number of Family Court Judges from 52 to 46. Estimated savings based on current cost for Family Court Judge and staff is approximately \$1,712,496 in personal service (6 Judges, 6 Secretaries and 6 Court Reporters) and other operating expenses annually.

The Election Commission

The Agency indicates there will be no fiscal impact on the General fund of the State or on Federal and/or Other Funds. While there is a cost associated with conducting the election for the judges, the funding for statewide general elections is sufficient to cover this cost.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IMPACT:

There should be little or no impact on county governments assuming the election of Family Court Judges coincides with general elections.

SPECIAL NOTES:

A reduction in the number of family court judges could create delays in the processing of family court cases.

Approved by:



Don Addy
Assistant Director, Office of State Budget